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FALL 2004

THE CONTINENTAL MARINE MAGAZINE

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THIS PAGE: Amphibious assault vehicles begin a left-flank movement during a beach assault during UNITAS. Photo by Sgt. Jennifer M. Antoine

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COMMANDANT:

II MEF slated for Spring in Iraq, Corps adapts to terror war

"We can't do it without the Reserves."

Gen. Michael W. Hagee
Commandant of the Marine Corps

STAFF SGT. BILL LISBON

MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Public Affairs Office

CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq — The Corps' top general recently confirmed that the II Marine Expeditionary Force will take over command of Marine operations in Iraq next spring and Reserves will play a greater role this fall.

During a visit here July 19, Commandant Gen. Michael W. Hagee told Marines and sailors that the Camp Lejeune, N.C.,-based force will relieve the I MEF, based in Camp Pendleton, Calif., which currently holds the reigns of Marine operations in western Iraq.

Though the other subordinate headquarters such as the 2nd Marine Division and the 2nd Force Service Support Group will also come from the East Coast, various battalions and squadrons will be drawn from those available across the globe.

"To us, an infantry battalion is an infantry battalion. It doesn't matter whether it comes from the East Coast or West Coast," Hagee said.

Several Lejeune-based units are already deployed to Iraq under the command of I MEF, such as the 2nd Military Police Battalion, guarding convoys for the 1st FSSG, or 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, operating south of Baghdad.

The news indicates that Marines can expect to spend another year in Iraq.

"Number one priority, without a doubt, is this mission right here. And it is going to continue to be," Hagee said.

During several talks with Marines of the 1st FSSG and the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing here, the Commandant discussed how the Marine Corps would adapt for its continued role in Iraq, and in the fight against terrorism abroad.

"We're looking at capabilities that do not directly support the Global War on Terrorism ... and we're going to do away with them," Hagee said.

One the Commandant specifically cited was fabric repair, a field with Marines who patch holes in tents, Humvee seats and flak jackets.

"We have over 200 Marines in the Marine Corps who have been trained to repair fabric. We don't need that anymore," he said.

By eliminating antiquated jobs, the Corps will have more people available to fill the ranks of fields with shortfalls, like explosive ordnance disposal. The constant threat of improvised explosives along Iraqi highways has the bomb squad Marines in especially high demand.

In the recent past, stateside bases began leaning heavily on civilians to maintain permanent facilities, such as mess halls and warehouses -- jobs that used to be done by Marines. This frees up more of the

Corps' approximately 175,000 troops to deploy to foreign lands, while keeping posts running back home.

Even in Iraq, the Corps employs civilian contractors. Marines pay them to cook and dish out chow, drive civilian cargo trucks, clean sinks and showers, and even fill sand bags.

"We are using more and more contractors to do various things, and I can tell you that's not necessarily bad," the Commandant said.

Operating this way works better for the Corps, Hagee said. He opposes adding more Marines to the ranks; he'd rather reconfigure the current force to handle the mission at hand. Lawmakers in Washington, D.C., are pushing legislation to increase the number of Marines by as many as 9,000 and the size of the Army by 30,000 over three years. However, the costs would be too high, and when the need for increased strength has passed, the Corps would have to be drawn down again.

Already, the Corps has added three percent to its maximum troop strength -- a provision afforded the Marines during wartime.

Upwards of 35,000 are currently deployed in combat operations worldwide, with just as many training to replace them in the future.

Approximately 25,000 I MEF Marines and sailors shipped out to



Staff Sgt. Bill Lisbon

The Corps' top general visits Marines and Sailors throughout western Iraq July 18-20 in order to hear how things are going in Iraq from those deployed there.

Iraq early this year to begin the first of two back-to-back, seven-month deployments. The second wave of troops should be in place this Fall. Among those, will be as many as 5,000 Reserves, an increase of 2,000 from the current crew.

"We can't do it without the Reserves," Hagee said.

Of the nine Marine infantry battalions presently in Iraq, one -- 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, based throughout the Mid-

west -- is from the Reserves. Other supporting units, as well as individual Reserves, augment the active-duty force.

Using Reserve Marines is unavoidable, Hagee said. About half of the Marine Corps' 24 infantry battalions, in addition to many supporting units, are deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and, until recently, Haiti. Furthermore, the Marine Corps has turned an artillery battalion in Iraq into provisional infantry battalion, which guards convoys and supply routes, since the need for artillery is low.

Whether the same number of Marines will be needed next spring to support what is being dubbed as "Operating Iraqi Freedom III" is still unclear.

"We're hoping for the best case. In other words we'll be able to bring down the forces," Hagee said.

On June 28, the Iraqi interim government took power, ushering in a new phase in U.S. military operations where Marines would hopefully fade into the background while Iraqi national guardsmen and police kept the peace.

"We want to put an Iraqi face on this particular operation. We don't want to be out front. We want to train the Iraqi security forces, their army, their national guard, and their police," the Commandant said.

"The better we can do that, the faster we can do that, the quicker we will be out of here," he said.



Staff Sgt. Bill Lisbon

Lance Cpl. Drashaone J. Wimberly and Cpl. Maria C. Diaz, and other 1st Force Service Support Group Marines, listen to Gen. Michael W. Hagee, commandant of the Marine Corps, as he speaks to troops at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, on July 19.

Commander honored with ROA Minuteman Award

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans — The Commander of Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans, Lt. Gen. Dennis M. McCarthy, was inducted into the Reserve Officer's Association's Minuteman Hall of Fame June 12 during a ceremony at the Grand American Hotel in Salt Lake City.

Lt. Gen. McCarthy received the annual award for "conspicuously contributing to the advancements of ROA's programs and objectives," while serving as the commander of Marine Forces Reserve.

"General McCarthy has instilled the 'power of pride' among his Reserves," said retired Coast Guard Rear Adm. and president of the ROA, G. Robert Merrilees, at the awards ceremony.

Merrilees said Lt. Gen. McCarthy triumphed during a challenging time for Reserves, when deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti and the Horn of Africa activated 63 percent of the Marine Corps Reserve force. He concluded by calling Lt. Gen. McCarthy a true friend of the ROA.

"It is a very high honor to be recognized by an organization for which I have so much respect," said Lt. Gen. McCarthy.

The primary objective of the organization is to support a U.S. military policy that ensures adequate national security.

The ROA was founded on Oct. 2, 1922, and originally stood as an advocate for preparedness during the isolationist and disarmament concepts that existed in the United States during the time between World War I and World War II. Many American citizens wanted to avoid world affairs and downsize the military after the turbulent first World War. The organization perceived these sentiments to be a potential threat to national security.

Today, the organization is chartered by congress to represent all of the nation's uniformed services, to include the United States Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It has more than 500 chapters worldwide including a chapter in every state, one in the District of Columbia, Europe, the Far East and Puerto Rico.

The ROA inducts one person into the Minuteman Hall of Fame annually. Previous winners include Congressman Terry Everett and President George W. Bush.

Though being recognized for his ability and proficiency, Lt. Gen. McCarthy recognizes there is still some work to be done.

"My job is to support the Marines and sailors of this Force who are mobilizing and fighting," said Lt. Gen. McCarthy. "We need to make sure they have the right training, equipment and resources to do what they have set out to do. We also need to remove the policy roadblocks that make it difficult to have seamless integration between the active and Reserve components."



Mike James

Lt. Gen. Dennis M. McCarthy is presented with a plaque by retired Coast Guard Rear Adm., and president of the ROA, G. Robert Merrilees, inducting him into the Minuteman Hall of Fame.

New support teams aid Reserves

MASTER GUNNERY SGT. SANTIAGO V. RODRIGUEZ

Marine Forces Reserve G-4

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans — The United States Marine Corps Reserve has become a necessary and integral component for success on the modern battlefield. Active duty forces rely upon their Reserve brethren to ensure the successful defense of our Nation and preservation of our way of life.

During preparatory phases leading up to Operation Iraqi Freedom, the staff of MarForRes G-4 developed and implemented several important initiatives in anticipation of massive mobilizations. These initiatives serve as foundations to a series of plans to ensure our Marines are well equipped and prepared to augment active duty forces.

The intent of the Commander MarForRes is clear and unequivocal: "Reset the force," as quickly and efficiently as possible to meet our Corps' future operational requirements. Reserve mobilizations/demobilizations are inherently challenging as units are separated by thousands of miles from parent commands.

In keeping with the Commander's intent, the G-4 developed Deployment Support Teams (DST) and Redeployment Support Teams (RST). These teams are crucial to the successful deployment, redeployment and reconstitution efforts of reserve units and their equipment. Team structures are tailored to meet current operational demands, and as units demobilize, the mission shifts transitionally to RST structures to simultaneously support mobilizations and demobilizations at the Intermediate Locations (ILOC).

Deployment/Redeployment teams are components of the Materiel Support Team (MST). A MST consists of two sections, a materiel readiness team (MRT) and either a DST or RST component, depending on mission requirements. The MRT morphs into a robust structure as it evolves into a dual action element in support of both mobilizations and demobilizations. Both DST

and RST support the embarkation mission, coordinate large group travel itineraries and serve as marshaling liaison for unit and individual movements. The RST places greater emphasis on supply and maintenance at the ILOC. The RST mission includes, but is not limited to the collection, inspection and repair of small arms, and collection and inspection of protective inserts plates, nuclear, biological and chemical equipment, and excess utility uniforms issued above and beyond normal allowances.

Prior to unit activation units are assessed for total readiness through evaluation and identification of critical deficiencies ranging from ICCE to end items. To proactively meet these demands, the G-4 established a Critical Asset Rapid Distribution Facility (CARDF). The mission of the CARDF is to mitigate critical asset deficiencies. As deficiencies are identified the MRT coordinates with the CARDF and other sources of supply to rectify shortfalls.

Upon redeployment, units are directed to drop off their equipment for inventory and maintenance in preparation for return to the Reserve Training Center (RTC). The MRT in its redeployment phase is responsible for equipment inductions into the maintenance cycle.

Equipment requiring corrective maintenance is identified and requisitions are processed for Class IX support. As parts are received they are delivered to designated unit marshalling areas (UMA) consolidated at the ILOC to restore equipment to serviceability.

While components of the RST focus on the management of the corrective maintenance efforts, alternatively strategic mobility members of the RST focus on transportation planning to attain the greatest degree of cost effectiveness associated with TOT/TOP. The MRT oversees T/A turnovers ensuring joint limited technical inspections (JLTI) are being performed, and also provide the oversight necessary to ensure units receive required administrative and medical support.

The MRT has become the front line logistical muscle of the Commander MarForRes, and remains ever constant aware of the fact that effective logistical planning and execution is key to eventual success on the battlefield.

Reserve activations reach milestone high

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN
Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans —

Not since the Korean War have Marine Reserves encountered such a strenuous operational tempo.

The number of Reserve activations recently topped the Gulf War total of 30,586, which in 1991 was the highest number of activations in 37 years. As of July 13, the total Marine Reserves activated reached 31,900.

"We've been activating, deactivating, and then reactivating to get as much life out of our units as possible," said Lt. Col. Keith A Hulet, director of manpower for Marine Forces Reserve. He added that this much of a demand has not been put on the Reserves in over 50 years.

Because of the new situation, adjustments to the Marine Corps Total Force System have been necessary. Keeping track of the length and frequency of the Marine Reserve activation, and whether or not Marines volunteered, can prove to be a complicated endeavor.

"The system wasn't developed to track all of these different types of scenarios," said MarForRes mobilization officer, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robin C. Porche. "The containment piece is what is challenging now, but we're meeting that challenge."

Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Reserve units have consistently been activated and



File photo

reactivated. Three years later, Marine Corps Reserves continue doing their part to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This November, sustainment of Reserve Forces supporting combat operations for the Global War on Terrorism will surpass the length of the entire Korean War, making the Global War on Terrorism the longest sustained Marine Reserve operation since World War II.

Hulet said, that despite the strain, Marines in the Reserve Force still have good morale. "Our recruiting and retention numbers are still high, our reserves are still motivated, and they're providing a viable and essential role in the (Global War on Terrorism)," he said.

MARFORRES STRESSES SAFETY ON THE STREET:

ON...

Black boxes keep vigil of government vehicles

CPL. ENRIQUE SAENZ

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans — “Black boxes” aboard airliners have helped tell the tale of downed aircraft for decades, but now they’re being used on the ground to help prevent accidents from happening in the first place.

Marine Forces Reserve is the first major Marine command to install the AutoWatch and FleetWatch vehicle monitoring systems, a type of “black box” for ground transportation, in its non-tactical government vehicles.

“The systems are intended to help reduce vehicle misuse and the high costs associated with them, including fuel and maintenance costs, by watching the way vehicles are used and, possibly, abused,” said Deputy Director of the MarForRes Safety Office, Jeff Peters. “The systems could also potentially save drivers’ lives by allowing the commander to determine who is a dangerous driver and address the problem.”

Units with four or less non-tactical vehicles use the AutoWatch version of the monitoring system, and units with five or more use the FleetWatch version because of its increased storage capabilities. Both versions are easily installed under a vehicle’s steering column and connected into its diagnostic port, where certain information is passed on to the system’s processor and stored for later interpretation.

“The systems let the commanding officer set limits for the vehicles’ speed, throttle position and engine speed,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Bruce Adams, MarForRes traffic

safety officer. “The system won’t prevent the driver from breaking these limits, but will record every time the limits are broken and will be logged as a violation.”

Violators and repeat offenders may have to attend remedial training at the Driver Improvement Course, have their government owned vehicle driving privileges suspended or even receive a disciplinary report in their Service Record Book.

“The system is not for us to become Big Brother,” said Adams, “but to watch that our vehicles are being used efficiently and that our money is being spent wisely.”

MarForRes plans on saving about \$8,000 per month in fuel costs with the conservative driving brought about with the use of the monitoring systems.

“People get into this ‘I gotta go

faster’ mindset when they’re driving, thinking that they’re saving time. But they’re not doing that. They’re just putting themselves in danger and wasting more money to get somewhere a few seconds faster by burning fuel and wasting away tires,” said Peters.

If an accident does occur, the monitoring systems can recall the last 20 seconds of the vehicle’s speed, which is important when determining the cause of an accident.

“It’s not all about money,” said Peters, “but if we can prevent one person from getting killed or injured, the system’s paid for itself.”

AutoWatch and FleetWatch are equipped in 98 percent of MarForRes non-tactical vehicles. Headquarters Marine Corps is planning on expanding the range of the program in the near future.

Seatbelts save Marines

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, NEW ORLEANS — From October 2003 through May 18, 2004, 46 Marines and sailors lost their lives in four-wheel personal motor vehicle mishaps. Approximately 35 percent were not buckled up.

Two Reserve Marines with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division involved in a car accident in Perrysburg, Ohio, avoided becoming a similar statistic on June 8.

According to an Ohio State Highway Patrol report, witnesses of the accident saw a full-sized truck run a red light on Highway 795. It then struck the driver side of a compact car carrying Lance Cpl.

AND OFF-DUTY



Courtesy of Perrysburg, Ohio Fire Department

The side of the vehicle Lance Cpl. Williams and Lance Cpl. Bartkowiak were traveling in was demolished. Both Marines were injured in the accident. They credit safety belts with saving their lives.

Erick E. Bartkowiak and Lance Cpl. Daniel L. Williams Jr.

"The Marine entered the intersection on his green light and was struck by a westbound pickup truck that did not stop for his red light," said the officer-in-charge of the investigation, Ohio State Patrol Officer Shane L. Johnson.

According to witnesses, the force of the crash caused the car to spin completely around. The report stated that most of the Marine's vehicle was consumed by the impact, bending the entire driver's side inward.

Bartkowiak, the driver of the vehicle, was airlifted to Saint Vincent Mary Hospital by helicopter for treatment of extensive injuries and was later released June 15. Williams was brought by ambulance to Saint Vincent Mary suffering from minor injuries and released later that day. Both Marines were wearing their seatbelts at the time of the accident.

"More than likely I would have been tossed out of the window had I not been wearing a seatbelt," said Williams, who wears a seatbelt consistently.

According to the National Highway Safety Traffic Administration, 4,200 lives could be saved if 90 percent of Americans wore their seatbelts.

"They give you the best chance at staying in the car," said Bartkowiak, who also wears his seatbelt regularly.

"In most states and aboard all military installations, buckling up is mandatory," stated Naval Safety Center Commanding Officer Rear Adm. Richard E. Brooks in a Memorial Day safety message released this year.

All service members under the age of 26 are required to learn about using seat belts and defensive driving during a mandatory driver's safety

course available through all military installations. The course lasts only one day and involves periods of instruction and written tests.

Motor Transport Chief for Marine Forces Reserve in New Orleans, Staff Sgt. Christopher A. Publer explained the course was to "teach and promote driver safety." The course helps students "exercise the principles they need when they're out there on the road."

According to the NHTSA, 59 percent of all drivers and passengers involved in fatal car accidents last year were unrestrained. Fortunately, the problem is improving. The NHTSA states that seatbelt use rose from 58 percent in 1994, to 79 percent last year.

"Once you start doing it, it just becomes a habit," said 21-year-old Williams.

These driving habits are suggestions echoed by driving safety courses and by Trooper Johnson himself.

"Never underestimate the fact that you've got a green traffic signal and make sure to drive defensively," he said.

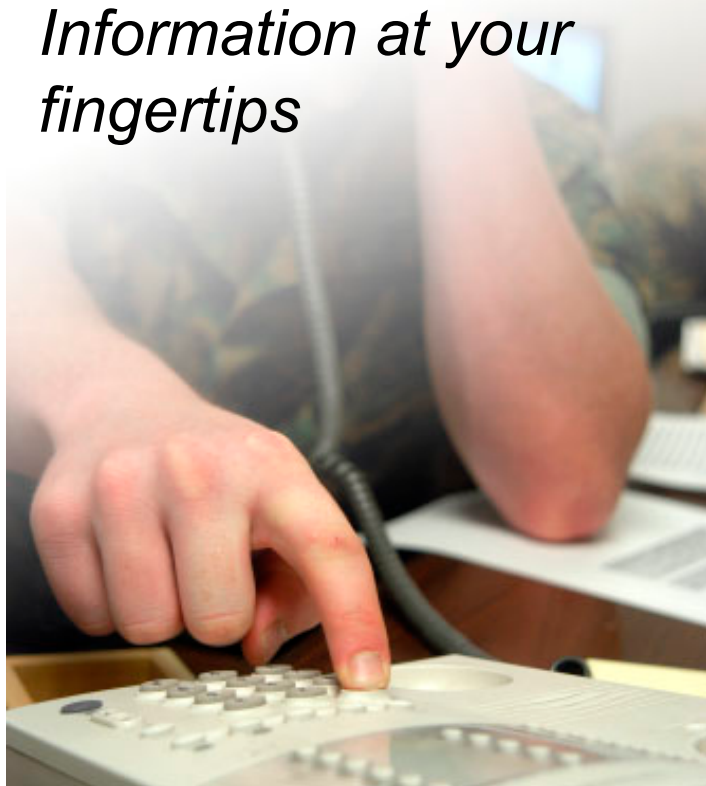
After spending a week in the hospital recovering from his injuries, Bartkowiak has some advice for Marines and sailors: "Always look before you go and be sure to wear your seat belt."

A statement given to Ohio State Highway Patrol by the driver of the pickup truck that hit Williams and Bartkowiak, said something he left on the floor of his truck was under his brake pedal as he attempted to depress it, preventing him from stopping at the red light.

"Seatbelts really do come in handy, and it's always when you least expect it," said Williams. "I put mine on and it saved my life."

MCCS One Source

Information at your fingertips



CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCE RESERVE, New Orleans — 4-1-1 is no longer the leading phone number for information. Marine Corps Community Services, in conjunction with the Ceridian Corporation, has established a one-stop telephone and Internet service that provides an almost endless supply of information for Marines and their families, MCCS One Source.

One Source is a free service funded by the Office of the Secretary of Defense that is available 24-hours a day, seven-days a week, and 365-days a year to any Marine in the United States or overseas, and their families.

The Commander of Marine Force Reserves, Lt. Gen. Dennis M. McCarthy, briefed MarForRes family readiness officer representatives from Reserve sites all over the country on the benefits of One Source at a family readiness officer training session here July 1.

"MCCS One Source is a tremendous resource. It gives Marine Force Reserve Marines and their families access to an incredible range of resources right from their home," said McCarthy. "It is valuable for our families before, during and after mobilization."

One Source doesn't strictly cater to military or Marine Corps-related questions, according to Linda M. Mixon, program manager for One Source.

"It's a family readiness tool that provides information and resources to Marines and family members on a wide range of issues," said Mixon. "A sergeant

major here said that he wanted to go out and sing karaoke one night. He used his cell phone to call One Source and within minutes he had a confirmed karaoke place."

One Source also offers a wide variety of free reference materials that they will mail out free of charge. Their facilities in Philadelphia, Miami and Minneapolis have thousands of electronically stored articles that can be printed on demand.

"What is amazing to me is that I'm sitting at my desk and press send on an e-mail, and instantly a package is being put together within minutes," said Dan Lafferty, a consultant at One Source.

Consultants at One Source are trained to field a wide variety of questions stemming from financial and educational concerns, to aiding a military family with the hardships of deployments. Approximately 400 employees who work at the One Source site in Philadelphia work in shifts to ensure the service is readily available 24-hours a day. There is no automated menu to navigate.

"A live person will answer the phone every single time," said Mixon. "And all of the consultants have higher education degrees to support the work they do."

1st Sgt. Mark T. Hatley, Inspector-Instructor for Battery F, 2nd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, 4th Marine Division, in Oklahoma City said his experience with the One Source website "was nice and easy. The website is very easy to navigate." Hatley went on to say that he briefs his Marines and their family members about One Source regularly.

One Source can be accessed either by telephone or Internet. From inside the United States, Marines can call **800.869.0278**. Marines and their families stationed overseas can reach One Source by calling **800.869.0278**. To access it on the Internet, go to www.mccsonesource.com, type in "**Marines**" for the user ID and "**Semper Fi**" for the password.



Cpl. Adam J. Tustin

Symbols of patriotism adorn the Ceridian facility. The Human Resource Solution Company is qualified to handle a wide range of problems facing Marines and their families.

ISB to increase Intelligence gathering

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans — During a time of war, it's important to know your enemy.

The establishment of the Intelligence Support Battalion headquartered in New Orleans later this fall will reorganize existing Reserve Intelligence units into a battalion, and increase the size of the Reserve Intelligence element while maximizing its efficiency.

According to a release from the ISB, its mission is to provide task-organized detachments of intelligence personnel to augment the active component elements, joint commands, and national agencies in times of crisis, contingency, and war.

"The Marine Corps continually looks to the future for opportunities to maximize our resources while maintaining our readiness for any potential threats through review processes like the Comprehensive Review Group", commented Col. Don Nelson, commanding officer, ISB. "The Intelligence Support Battalion is a product of that process."

According to Nelson, the ISB was a concept originally developed by

Marine Forces Reserve Intelligence Marines in 2000. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, there was an immediate requirement for increased intelligence support for Operation Enduring Freedom, the war on terrorism, and homeland security.

"The Intelligence Support Battalion will provide the organization that has been needed for the Reserve Intelligence community," said Capt. Brian R. Miller, deputy G-2, MarForRes. Miller went on to explain that the ISB will basically reorganize and increase the current Reserve Intelligence structure to maximize its capability and efficiency.

Currently, there are 10 force-level Reserve Intelligence Units that report directly to MarForRes headquarters. The ISB will arrange the units into a battalion command structure that will report to the headquarters in New Orleans.

"Not only are we forming a chain-of-command, but we're also adding 12 new units," said Maj. Brian C. Hormberg, Inspector-Instructor, ISB.

The increase from 10 units to 22 will open 286 new billets for Reserve Intelligence Marines to fill.

"Intelligence MOS's (military occupational specialties) are high demand and low density," said Hormberg.

Fortunately for the Marine Reserve Intelligence community,

recruiting Reserves into intelligence MOS's should prove to be a little bit easier, thanks to the ISB expanding the number of unit locations across the United States, thereby providing Reserve intelligence Marines with more locations to drill.

The new units that are part of ISB will work out of 12 Joint Reserve Intelligence Centers (JRICs) located throughout the country. Multiple sites will increase the battalion's ability to independently recruit, train, employ and retain Reserve Marines. The JRICs offer Reserves the opportunity to work "real-world" intelligence missions during each drill. This new capability will enable the battalion to support intelligence production by means of "reach-back", providing intelligence products directly to the "warfighter" in theater from sites within the U.S.

"This battalion is geared towards supporting the gaining force command," Hormberg.

The ISB will be organized into three intelligence companies headquartered in California, Colorado, and Virginia, and the headquarters company based in New Orleans.

According to Nelson, the ISB should be fully staffed within the next 12-18 months. For more information on the ISB, please contact Capt. Brian Miller at 504.678.4119.

Consequences of contraband: forbidden fruits of combat

CAPT. PETER TABASH

4th Civil Affairs Group

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans — I was asked to write an article on the severity of bringing in contraband, specifically ammunition, from overseas or any other part of the world. Not only is such action against military regulations, but it is also very dangerous.

Although it has always been a United States Central Command general order (GO-1A), this matter became particularly important during Operation Enduring Freedom because of the abundant supply and easy access to weapons and ammunition in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Contraband is any of, but not limited to, the following: bayonets, knives, ammunition (live or inert), pistols, rifles, explosive ordnance and/or drugs.

Marines ranging in rank from private to colonel have been caught and were charged with every punishment from a simple non-punitive letter of reprimand to a full court martial. It is a crime that could definitely end an otherwise promising career. An officer or enlisted Marine's career is equally imperiled by such an offense.

The most popular items that have been confiscated are the AK-47 rifle and the bayonet that attaches to it. Possession of items such as the AK-47 rifle can lead to further trouble as they are considered assault weapons, which are illegal in the United States. It is a federal crime if a person is caught with such a weapon.

These measures are in place due to the possible dangers presented by the old and unreliable rounds, explosives, or weapons taken. Most undeveloped countries do not have the same rigorous maintenance and inspection procedures that we have here in the United States Armed Services. For instance, contraband could explode in a plane or on a ship if it experiences any type of thermal expansion. The sad part about these incidents is that it is usually the innocent Marine that gets hurt.

Bottom line Marines, for your career and the safety of your fellow Marines, do not take any chances. Obey the rules and do NOT attempt to bring in any contraband. While overseas do the right thing, come back safe, and most important, be a proud Marine veteran.

marines

ack of Trades

LANCE CPL. HEIDI E. LOREDO

MAGTFCT Twentynine Palms, Calif., Public Affairs Office

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER

Twentynine Palms, Calif. — When retired Marine Lt. Col. Jack Lewis sold his first story he wasn't thinking about the possibility of Hollywood glamour. Instead he was thinking of making money.

Lewis, born in Iowa on Nov. 13, 1924, three days after the Marine Corps birthday, made a career as a Reserve Marine, ranch hand, steelworker, private detective and for a short time, as a motion picture actor and Hollywood stuntman.

At 14 years of age, Lewis sold his first short story titled "The Cherokee Kid's Last Stand" for \$5.

"Since grown men were working the fields in those days for \$1 a day, I figured this was a great way to make a living," said Lewis. "I didn't sell anything again until I was 22, but some of the stuff I wrote in the interim has since sold for minor amounts of money."

With the illusion of scoring big bucks through writing, Lewis mailed his first screenplay "Andy Hardy Goes to College" to MGM. The movie company rejected the unsolicited manuscript, however, a disillusioned Lewis continued to write.

After turning 18, Lewis put his writing aside and enlisted in the Marine Corps to prove he was as good as a man as his Army cavalry father, or perhaps it was the faded memory of one of his earlier youthful adventures that prompted him to join the Few and the Proud.

"An early memory was being lost in a department store and being rescued by two Marines in dress blues," said Lewis. "I assume now they were local recruiters. I was about five, but I knew then I wanted one of them 'purty' uniforms."

Lewis served as an enlisted Marine and was commissioned as a second lieutenant during World War II.

Upon his return from the war he attended the University of Iowa to pursue a bachelor's degree in journalism. Immediately after receiving his degree, he received orders to Reserve duty at Camp Pendleton, Calif., to work on a training film. After finishing the script he still had several days to serve, so he went down to the Camp Pendleton beach to work for the technical director of the film "Sands of Iwo Jima."

"He put me to work explaining to actors how to lace up the yellow canvas leggings that were worn above high-top shoes," explained Lewis. "In those days we didn't have boots."

The glamour of Hollywood didn't last long for Lewis. When North Korea invaded South Korea he returned to active duty for nearly six years. While he was on his way to Korea his first movie "King of Bullwhip", was on its way to theatres.

Being a journalist and a Marine during combat gave Lewis the opportunity to write about his adventures. During his second tour in Korea, he wrote roughly 25 magazine articles about Marines, their adventures and misadventures.

"I submitted them to Headquarters Marine Corps," said Lewis. "A gentlemen sent them back saying they couldn't

place them; they sounded too much like Marine Corps propaganda. Somewhat [upset], since the man had never written anything beyond a fitness report, I sent the whole package to my literary agent in New York. She eventually sold all of the pieces for an average of around \$200 each—a batch of money in 1951. Of course I sent a copy of each published story to the gent who had returned my package."

During his time in Korea, Lewis received the Bronze Star for positioning himself well forward of 1st Marine Division battle lines to film Marine aircraft attacking enemy positions.

"As bombs were dropping behind us, as well as in front, I wondered what I was doing there. Obviously, I wasn't too smart," said Lewis.

Upon his return from Korea, Lewis was assigned to Camp Pendleton as a company commander in the reforming 4th Marine Regiment for three months. He was then sent to Hawaii to be a public information officer for what was then the 1st Provisional Marine Air Ground Task Force.

"I spent three years there, then decided I should be doing other things," said Lewis. "The commanding officer offered to get me a regular commission, but I explained that I considered myself more of a writer than a Marine and, sooner or later, I'd write something the Corps wouldn't like. I got out and tried to start a motion picture company in Hawaii."

During that time, Lewis took whatever odd jobs he could find including steel worker, ranch hand, newspaper reporter, private detective and movie stuntman.

"Finally I went back to Hollywood," said Lewis. "The idea was that I'd show them my medals, tell them I was a hero, and pick up where I'd left off."

But things didn't quite work out as he'd planned.

"Either no one remembered me or most of them pretended not to. So I fell off of horses for a living for three years."

Lewis, then 30 years old, continued to get in trouble, but always cashed in on his adventures. In 1954, during the filming of the movie "Mr. Roberts," in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, Lewis was to be a technical adviser.

"I found out the stuntmen were making \$700 for two days work," said Lewis. "So I started moonlighting. I was making \$660 a month as a captain including allowances. Anyway, the general caught me, and I ended up making a \$700 'contribution' to Navy Relief."

In the late 1950s there was a screenwriters strike in Hollywood and Lewis wasn't working. He wrote a short story and took it down to a magazine on Sunset Boulevard to sell it.

"I wandered into another magazine office," said Lewis. "They didn't buy my story but hired me as an editor. I spent a couple of years watching the publisher make mistakes and figured I could do better than that. His art director and I pooled \$300 each and turned out our first issue of 'Gun World.'"

Lewis and his partner considered themselves lucky because, even then, the odds of a new magazine lasting a year were about 13 to 1. Gun World is now in its 44th year.

Throughout the 1960s, Lewis wrote 11 feature films and in 1966 he published his first book, "Tell it to the Marines"—a humorous look at life in the Marine Corps.

"All of the characters and crazy things that happened to myself and my group in Korea are the basis for the book," said the 80-year old Lewis. "The serious side of war is for historians. Most of us would rather recall the crazy, unlikely things that happened to us and what we were able to do to accomplish our missions in spite of those problems which usually were created either by unforeseen circumstances or higher authority. The funny stuff is the only facet of war worth remembering. It's the unlikely incidents that make it all bearable"

The foreword reads, "Any similarity to persons, places or incidents is highly plausible; only the names have been changed to avoid court-martial."

He was out of the Marine Corps from 1959 to 1969 but was subsequently commissioned as a Reserve officer and volunteered for a special project in Vietnam with the 3rd Amphibious Force. In addition to the Bronze Star, he received the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal for combat photo flights and the Secretary of the Navy Commendation Medal in Korea. During his Vietnam tour he was awarded his second and third Air Medals.

On his 60th birthday, Nov. 12, 1984, Lewis retired from the Corps after he served as the public affairs adviser to the commanding general, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing.

"I miss the life," said Lewis. "But more important, I miss the people."

After serving as a stuntman, writing for magazines, opening his own publishing company, writing feature films and novels, Lewis said his most memorable moment as a Marine was his retirement gathering.

"Besides my own Reserve unit, there were Marines with whom I had served in three wars who came to the bash," said the retired Marine. "Included were several generals for whom I had worked along the way. The whole thing left me with the feeling that I had done a good job for the Corps and made a lot of fine friends along the way."

These days, Lewis writes several magazine articles a month and covers Hawaii for Leatherneck Magazine. He tries to write a novel a year and since moving to Hawaii in 1997, he has had seven published—three westerns and four mysteries.

"When the price of printing paper tripled virtually overnight, publishing wasn't fun any more. I sold everything I owned—except my wife and my dog—and came to Hawaii where I already owned a beach home. I no longer have the dog nor the wife, but they do have each other," joked Lewis.

Lewis credits his success and adventurous life to his determination and comical escapades.

"I've been told that I'm not smart enough to realize I can't tilt windmills and win," concluded Lewis, "but tenacity has a life and a way all its own, I've found. If one approach to a problem doesn't work, figure out how to go around it."

Photos courtesy of retired Marine Lt. Col. Jack Lewis

Devil Doc receives FMF Designation



Petty Officer 2nd Class Cochran stands at the position of attention during a morning ceremony honoring him at Camp Babylon, Iraq, June 26. The Cape Corral, Fla., native received the Fleet Marine Force designation.

Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

CPL. MATTHEW J. APPRENDI

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

CAMP BABYLON, Iraq — Nearly six years after enlisting into the U.S. Navy as a 36-year-old recruit, Petty Officer 2nd Class Del J. Cochran received his Fleet Marine Force designation as a corpsman at Camp Babylon, Iraq, June 26.

The 42-year-old activated reserve sailor serves with Detachment C, 4th Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company at Camp Babylon. 4th ANGLICO is supporting the Multi-National Division Central-South, led by the Polish army.

The unit's commanding officer, Lt. Col. Thomas R. Morgan pinned on Cochran's silver-colored wings, inscribed with "Fleet Marine Force," during a small morning ceremony. The newly acquired insignia was placed right below his gold jump wings.

"It's been a labor of love for the last three years to get pinned," said the native of Cape Corral, Fla.

Before entering the Navy, Cochran worked as a physical therapist, which he still performs on the civilian side. He holds associate's degrees in chemistry, physical therapy and liberal arts.

So why would an accomplished civilian drastically change his course in life to join the Navy?

"It all started in 1995, when my little sister was murdered," said Cochran. "It really hit me hard. It gave me a wake up call, and made me want to do more with my life."

As the years passed, Cochran searched for what he was after.

"During that time, my wife was really supportive of me," he said. "I guess I was going through a mid-life crisis."

He decided he wanted to do everything life had to

offer. He wanted no regrets.

"Well, instead of buying a new sports car or finding a 19-year-old girlfriend, I decided to join the military," Cochran said, chuckling.

The thought of joining the military had always been in his mind, but he always put it off — telling himself "now wasn't a good time" throughout periods in his life. He finally got sick of waiting and decided to act.

Cochran had his heart set on becoming a corpsman from the beginning. It seemed like the wisest career path, since he had both the experience and love of helping people.

However, the Navy placed him in a different field.

This did not deter Cochran's dreams, however, and after two years of perseverance, he finally got his wish.

After going through traditional corpsman training, he got the opportunity to transition to what is simply called the green side and work with the Marines.

The blue and green sides of the naval medical community differ greatly, according to Cochran. In the Navy, corpsmen mainly work inside a normal hospital setting, similar to the civilian world. Cochran wanted no part of that; he wanted to be in the field with a pack on his back — the same as the Marines. And he got what he asked for.

He was sent to West Palm Beach, Fla., to serve with ANGLICO — a unit that serves a liaison between Marine Corps air and naval assets and different U.S. services and foreign nations.

"I love the green side, some corpsman don't," he said. "Once you enter a Marine unit, you become one of them, and they take care of you at all costs."

Thus, a new quest began with Cochran — obtaining the FMF designation.

To achieve the designation, corpsmen must learn Marine Corps knowledge such as history, weapon systems and land navigation. In a nutshell, the basic skills Marine recruits learn at boot camp.

"I can't be a detriment to the team during a combat mission," he said. "I might be needed to hop on a crew served weapon and start laying down rounds to protect the Marines."

Not only did Cochran learn general Marine knowledge, he was equipped with the specific mission of ANGLICO. He learned how to operate radios and call for fire to destroy enemy targets from the land, air and sea.

ANGLICO Marines had been training Cochran for more than two years before he tackled a practical examination and a 564-question exam in Iraq.

"I've always engrossed myself with knowledge," he said. "I don't want to be that corpsman who says 'What do I do?' when every second counts to protect Marines lives. Passing is really a true testament to all the Marines who worked with me."

"Doc's a great guy," said Lance Cpl. William Meyer, a field radio operator from Indianapolis. "He's always there when you need him."

Cochran's abilities as a physical therapist fit right in with the ruggedness of a Marine unit — especially one that jumps out of planes and totes around 40 pounds of combat gear on a regular basis. He puts his therapeutic skills to use by aiding Marines inside their compound daily.

He has found "a new love for medicine" and plans on attending Nova University, Fla., to become a physician assistant when he returns home from his seven-month deployment.



A Hero Among Marines

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans —

"Mike" Raymond M. Clausen, a Medal of Honor recipient, passed away at the Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas May 30 at the age of 56, due to liver failure.

A funeral service for Clausen was held at the St. Joseph Catholic Church in Ponchatoula, La., June 7. A military burial with a 21-gun salute and a fly-over by CH-46 helicopters followed the service at Ponchatoula City Cemetery, where old and young Marines gathered to honor their fallen comrade.

The Louisiana native enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves on May 27, 1966. He served as a helicopter crew chief in Vietnam with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. On Jan. 31, 1970, Pfc. Clausen participated in the rescue of a Marine platoon that had been stranded in a minefield. Once Clausen's helicopter had safely landed, and against orders from his superior officer, Clausen ventured into the minefield six times, bringing 18 Marines to safety.

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, President Richard M. Nixon awarded Clausen the Medal of Honor on June 15, 1971. As Nixon presented the medal to Clausen, he shook his hand and said, "Well done, Marine." Clausen was the only aviation Marine to receive a Congressional Medal of Honor for service during Vietnam.

Clausen was one of the remaining 132 veterans alive today who received the Medal of Honor. A complete list of his medals and decorations include: the Medal of Honor, the Air Crewman Insignia with three Gold Stars; and 98 Strike Flights Awards of the Air Medal, The Combat Action Ribbon, the Purple Heart, the Presidential Unit Citation, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with one silver and one bronze star, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, the Vietnam Campaign Medal with device, and the Rifle Sharpshooter Badge.

Clausen is survived by his wife of 28 years, Lois Clausen. Donations may be made to the Mike Clausen Memorial Fund at the First Community Bank in Hammond, La. For more information contact Vivian Brown at **985.429.9899**.



training

any 'CLIMB' or place

MarForRes and 3/23 Marines take training to a higher level

LANCE CPL. MAXWELL D. FOX

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans —

Marines based out of Louisiana left the flat lands May 28 to conquer new heights in Bridgeport, Calif., for a two-week mountain warfare training evolution.

Marines with 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marines, 4th Marine Division and Headquarters Battalion, Marine Forces Reserve, tackled the mountains of the Mountain Warfare Training Center to develop new tactical skills on different terrain and higher elevations.

"This is good training for any Marine," said Staff Sgt. Steven Donaldson, acting company gunnery sergeant, Weapons Company, 3/23. "It gives them the knowledge of operating in a mountain environ-



Lance Cpl. Maxwell D. Fox

Marines with MarForRes and 3/23 learn different types of knots for various uses in a mountain environment.

ment."

The training came at a good time for 3/23 Marines, with the possibility of being deployed to Afghanistan next year.

The rough, mountainous terrain, dry climate and increasingly high temperatures here are similar to that of an Afghani environment. This specialized training is especially beneficial to Reserve Marines who are only afforded this opportunity during their two-week annual training.

"The Reserves are walking a fine line having to learn in such a short period of time," said Gunnery Sgt. Martin A. Matterson, operations chief, Weapons Co. "But it gets them ready to operate in a different environment."

For MarForRes Marines, it was a good reason to get out of the office and get dirty with the Marines they support year-round.

"The training was good to go," said Sgt. Willis J. Taylor, motor transport operator, HQBN, MarForRes. "I wish it were mandatory for all the Marines here."

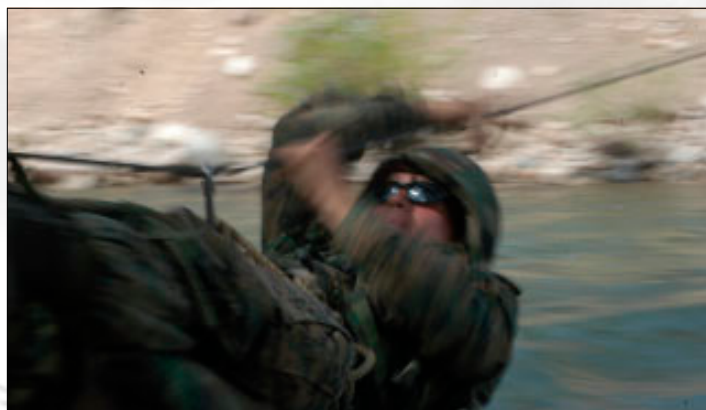
The mountain warfare training basically consisted of preparatory classes and a four-day rock package,



which includes rappelling and stream crossing. This was followed by life in the field for five days learning first hand how to survive in a new environment.

"After a while I got used to the mountain atmosphere," said Pfc. Jarius Golliday III, administrative clerk, HQBN. "It gave me an understanding of what Marines are facing in other countries."

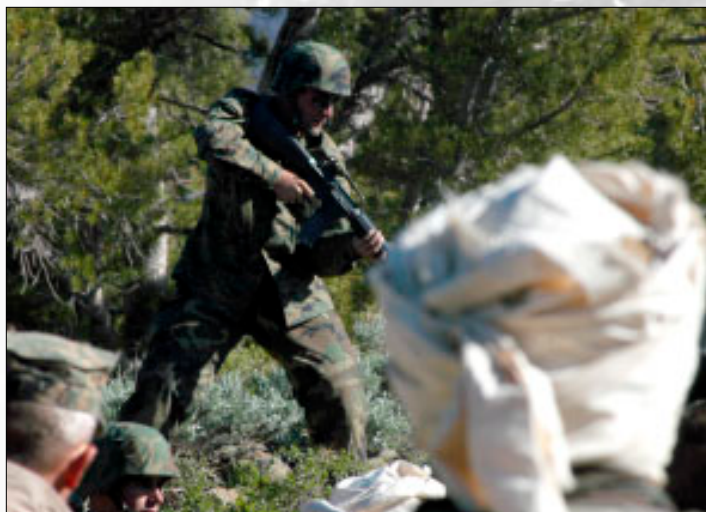
Even though the Marines were already over 9,000 feet, they were challenged with more obstacles than the average mountain warfare training evolution poses. The Marines were faced with a mock Afghani town which they had to seize, and protect the villagers while under caution of possible terrorist attacks. It was realistically portrayed, from searches for the deck of cards of high-ranking terrorist officials, to women and villagers bustling in the street complicating the Marines' search efforts.



Lance Cpl. Maxwell D. Fox

Lance Cpl. Justin T. Worrell, administrative clerk (above), and Sgt. Willis T. Taylor, motor transport operator (right), cross a stream by a single-rope bridge crafted by the Marines.

(left) Marines with 3/23, file suspected terrorists, played by MarForRes Marines, into a prison holding area for further interrogation.



Lance Cpl. Maxwell D. Fox



Lance Cpl. Maxwell D. Fox



Lance Cpl. Maxwell D. Fox

The Marines rappell from atop a 50-foot cliff, with and without their packs.



Lance Cpl. Maxwell D. Fox

The Marines carried packs of approximately 75 pounds for the duration of training.

"It felt good to finally have an understanding of what precautions the Marines have to take when entering an unknown area," said Sgt. Rolando Palacios, fiscal chief, HQBN. "There is no telling what can happen at anytime, so you always have to be prepared."

The MarForRes Marines were cast as the terrorists and villagers occupying the mock Afghani town the 3/23 Marines were targeting.

"They played a major role in our training evolution," said Lt. Col. David Conway, commanding officer, 3/23. "I will deploy with any of those Marines at anytime."

"I want every Marine who attends this training to walk away with the self-discipline that they were taught in boot camp," explained Conway. "Good leadership is the key for a unit to do anything possible or the impossible."

UNITAS 45 - 04

Marines make waves in South America

SGT. JENNIFER M. ANTOINE

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

ANCON, Peru — After more than two weeks of weapons, jungle, and amphibious assault training, the Marines and Sailors aboard the *USS Tortuga*, who took part in UNITAS 45-04, have completed the first ever multi-national exercise in South America.

UNITAS has traditionally consisted of several small bi-lateral exercises throughout South America. This year, however, UNITAS brought together 11 South American countries and held one large-scale multi-national exercise.

"This mission of UNITAS is to foster friendships with other foreign navy and Marine Corps units," said Lt. Col. Glen R. Smith, commander, UNITAS. "I think we accomplished it extremely well."

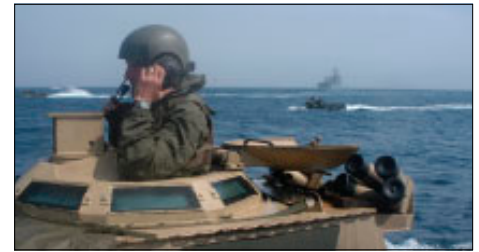
The exercise was split into two phases: first the littoral phase, which consisted of ground training here, and second, the final battle problem with amphibious assault in Salinas, Peru.

The training began at the *Infanteria de Marina* (Peruvian Infantry Marine base) and *Que Brada Inocente*, a weapons range nearby. The Marines not only learned how other countries operate and train, but also taught U.S. methods to the multi-national force.

Training stations were set up at both locations, and Marines from participating countries rotated through them over the course of the exercise.

"The best training the Marines received was during the stations," said Maj. Todd W. Kocian, executive officer, UNITAS. "They learned a lot from other countries and also gained experience in instructing others."

While at the *Infanteria De Marina*, the training stations included instruction of military techniques such as combat swimming, fast-roping, the rappelling tower, and military operations in urban terrain.



Sgt. Jennifer M. Antoine

1st Lt. Jason R. Burgan, communicates with other AAVs participating in the main beach assault during UNITAS.

"I think the fast-roping was the most fun part of training," said Cpl. Jon C. Swanson, Communications Company, 4th Force Service Support Group, Greensboro, N.C. "It is not something every Marine gets a chance to do."

At *Que Brada Inocente*, the Marines spent time firing different weapons such as the .50-caliber and the 240G machine guns, the AT-4 grenade launcher as well as many foreign weapons.

Additional stations at *Que Brada Inocente* included demonstrations of non-lethal riot control and non-combatant evacuation operations.

Simultaneously, approximately 60 Marines and corpsman were in the jungles of Iquitos, near the Amazon River basin, conducting station training of jungle navigation and survival, small boat operations, shelter construction, small arms fire and setting booby traps.

After the first phase of training was complete, the Marines traveled north to Red and Blue Beaches in Salinas Bay where an amphibious assault and tactical operations took place.

Two battalions were formed with Marines from 11 countries. 1st Battalion, debarked the Peruvian ship, *LST Callao*, in zodiacs and secured Red Beach, while 2nd Battalion assaulted Blue Beach in amphibious assault vehicles from the *USS Tortuga* the following morning.

After all objectives had been reached, the Marines gathered gear and weapons and boarded the *Tortuga* once again.

"The Marines did an outstanding job," said Kocian. "They operated in no less than eight different locations simultaneously, successfully."

"The exercise was a success and the Marines performed extremely well," said Smith. "This exercise has been going on for 45 years, and is one that needs to continue."

Ammunition Co. leaves its mark

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Huntsville, Ala. — Beans, bullets and bandages.

These are the three essential supplies necessary to win a war.

Marine Reserves from Ammunition Company, 4th Supply Battalion, 4th Force Service Support Group, mastered the second of the three military necessities here as they participated in their annual training July 18.

According to Sgt. David L. Kemp, a records instructor for the annual-training exercise, the two-week training evolution was unique, because it took place at the Ammunition Technician Military Occupational School here, rather than the Combined Arms Exercises in Twentynine Palms, Calif., where the Marines usually go for annual training.

Kemp said the change in venue has led to a more instructional environment. "Normally we're pulling ammo for using units to conduct their (combined arms exercises)," said Kemp. "Here, it's not quite as intense because we're here to instruct our Marines on the basics of how to do their jobs and try to give them a better understanding of the components."

Ammunition technicians received training on issuing, storing, recording and demolishing ammunition. The training evolution also enabled some of the Marines to train and test for their Humvee and seven-ton truck licenses, a goal that would prove



Lance Cpl. Adam J. Tustin

Marines learn how to properly store ammo.



Lance Cpl. Adam J. Tustin

Marines practice detonating MDI's in the event they ever need to destroy an ammunition supply point.

difficult during the one weekend-a-month training of non-activated Marine Reserves.

Ammunition technician Lance Cpl. Jack R. Schneiderman said he has "certainly learned a lot more than if I were just sitting in a classroom. It's been a lot more hands-on."

The hands-on training Marines like Schneiderman received, prepared them for the full spectrum of duties they're responsible for as ammunition technicians.

"Not all Marines get an opportunity to see all sides of ammo," said Maj. Philip Millerd, the Ammunition Company Commander. "This is an opportunity to send everybody through (each function) so now they get a better idea of what, and how (ammunition) moves through the Corps."

The training not only covered the many tasks of the 2311 military occupational specialty, it also involved Marines from the entire Ammunition Company, the first time all three units of the company came together to train. Approximately 68 Reserve Marines from units in Greenville, S.C., Topeka, Kan., and Rome, Ga., trained for two weeks in a joint environment.

"What we wanted to do this year was to get everyone together for a joint (annual training)," said Master Sgt. Jack Brown Jr., operations chief for Ammunition Company, Greenville, S.C. "We wanted to bring them together to train as one."

The standardized training the Marines received here is designed to increase their effectiveness and ability to work with one another in an operational theater.

"Personally, I've enjoyed this training immensely," said Kemp. "I know that it will benefit the Marines that came here this week."

New weapon for ammo tech. arsenal

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Huntsville, Ala. — Desperate times call for desperate measures. To ammunition technicians facing the inevitable surrender of his field ammunition supply point, there may be only one option: total annihilation of the ammunition before the enemy can take it for their own.

Marine Reserves from Ammunition Company, 4th Supply Battalion, 4th Force Service Support Group, were introduced to a new, more efficient way of initiating an explosion to destroy a field ammunition supply point during their two-week annual training here beginning July 18.

"We're testing a new MDI, or a Modernized Demolition Initiator," said Lance Cpl. Jack R. Schneiderman, an ammunition technician with Detachment 1, Ammunition Company, Rome, Ga. "It's new to the Marine Corps and it makes it a lot easier to (destroy ammunition)."

The Army has used MDI's since 1997, but the Marine Corps currently uses a technique involving crimping blasting caps, testing fuses and measuring fuse lengths before initiating demolition. The MDI's save time by having a pre-packaged system with the necessary fuse lengths already provided and the blasting caps factory crimped. The Army financed the MDI's for the Marines to use during the hands-on training.

"This system is a lot simpler, a lot more efficient, and a lot safer," said Gunnery Sgt. Toby A. Hurdle, the training chief at Ammunition Company in Greenville, S.C.

According to Hurdle, the new system will be phased into the Marine Corps over the next couple of years.

Cowboys saddle up, land in Far East

VMFA-112 takes the reins of deployed squadron

LANCE CPL. MARTIN R. HARRIS

MCB Camp Butler, Okinawa, Public Affairs Office

KADENA AIR BASE, OKINAWA, Japan — Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 112, a Reserve unit from 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, arrived here June 12 for their three-month deployment to the Far East region.

The F/A-18A+ Hornet fighter-attack squadron, which hails from Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, Texas, consists of 133 enlisted Marines, three maintenance officers and 18 pilots.

The mission during the deployment is to support 1st Marine Aircraft Wing during increased operational tempo in the Global War on Terrorism and to support the U.S. military presence in Asia, said Lt. Col. Steven M. Roepke, squadron executive officer. The squadron is the first Reserve Marine fighter attack squadron to be deployed as a unit since World War II, Roepke explained.

"This is huge for our unit. The Marine Corps always prides itself in being able to get the job done," Roepke said. "This just shows the confidence the Corps has in its Reserve units to come out here just like an active duty unit would to train and fight if needed."

While in Japan, the squadron will train with Air Force F-15 Eagle and F-16 Fighting Falcon fighter pilots, as well as Japanese pilots flying F-4 Phantom fighters.



Cpl. Joshua A. Tate

Sgt. Roberto C. RodriguezGarcia performs the final check of the landing gear on this F/A-18+ Hornet immediately before a pilot taxis to the runway for flight.



"We'll be doing air-to-air simulations as well as air-to-ground, and we'll also be dropping live ordnance on the island target ranges," said Maj. Christopher Koelzer, an F/A-18A+ pilot. "While we are here, we will be training with our AIM-9X (Sidewinder Missile), which is an improved version of our infrared missile."

The main challenge for the squadron on the deployment is the vast change in terrain and location, Koelzer said. Flying around the mountains of Japan, forests of Korea, and islands of Guam and Australia is something new for the squadron.

"It's a great opportunity for our pilots to learn the terrain and get

experience, as well as for our Marines to experience new and different cultures," Koelzer explained.

The squadron uses an older version of aircraft than what is used by active duty squadrons.

They fly the F/A-18A+ Hornet, which is a modified version of the original Hornet, Roepke said.

The modifications made to the F/A-18A Hornet include a new radar system that improves the range at which the aircraft can detect enemy aircraft, said Maj. Dan Moore, an F/A-18A+ Hornet pilot. Additionally, the aircraft can now carry the AIM-120, which is an active radar missile.

"Because of the new missiles, we can essentially launch and leave the

missiles," Moore said. "We can launch this missile (and) lock on the target for only a small amount of time."

"Then we can break the radar lock and turn around while the missile continues on by itself to the target."

Through the new modifications, the jets now also have global positioning satellite capabilities, Moore said. The fighters use this capability to easily track weapons and other aircraft.

The new enhancements make the "A+" as modern as any of those off the production line, said Roepke. He said now there is an added confidence in their technology and combat capabilities.

VMFA-112 "cowboy's up" in Japan

MAJ. MICHAEL P. JEFFRIES

VMFA-112, Fort Worth, Texas

KADENA AIR FORCE BASE, Japan — Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 112, a Texas based Reserve unit on active duty orders under 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Aircraft Group 12, has been conducting air-to-ground training in the Pacific area of responsibility in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

The squadron's F/A-18A Hornets have recently received upgrades and have been re-designated as the F/A-18A+. The modifications to the Hornet include a new radar system that improves the ability to detect enemy targets on the ground. The aircraft also received new mission computers allowing it to increase the number of weapons in its air-to-ground arsenal.

With the upgrades came the ability to carry and employ multiple new precision 'smart' weapons, such as the Joint Direct Attack Munition and the Joint Stand Off Weapon. The pilots have been training with these weapons since receiving their first upgraded aircraft two years ago.

"We can simulate all facets of weapon targeting and delivery now without having to carry JDAM or JSOW training weapons," said Capt. Kevin Paetzold, native of Keller, Texas. "Back in Fort Worth, we would execute dedicated JSOW or JDAM sorties to familiarize the pilots with the weapons. Since arriving in Okinawa, pilots have been executing simulated JDAM or JSOW releases on sorties as a secondary training mission."

Along with the upgrades to the aircraft came the Tactical Aircraft Mission Planning System. The system gives the aircrew the ability to plan weapon delivery information for 'smart' weapons such as JDAM and JSOW before the mission commences. Once mission planning is complete, the information can be loaded on a data cartridge and transferred to the aircraft for training or employment.

"Learning how to use the TAMPS system was an

integral part of the upgrade process for our aircraft and aircrew," said Maj. Everett Hood, native of Austin, Texas.

"The training opportunities here have been outstanding," Hood said. "We have been able to conduct air-to-ground training with Rockeye cluster bombs as well as 500 and 1,000 pound high-explosive bombs. Being able to execute tactics with these weapons on a daily basis for the past month has been a huge training opportunity for the pilots."

In addition to ordnance training, the squadron pilots have been doing everything possible to exercise the digital close air support capability that the Hornet received with the newest software replacement. "This squadron has been exercising the digital CAS system for over a year now," said Maj. Dan Dewhirst, native of Fort Worth, Texas. "Every pilot in the squadron is familiar with and has used the digital CAS system. The workload in the cockpit is dramatically reduced as well as the time required to get ordnance on target."

The squadron, which was one third of the way into its deployment with 1st MAF, was preparing to deploy to Guam for Exercise Jungle Shield. From there the squadron will head to Australia for Exercise Southern Frontier where they will continue their air-to-ground training.

"Target recognition with the Forward Looking Infra Red pod will be a big part of our focus of effort in Australia," said Capt. Kevin McDonald, native of Aledo, Texas. "We will use the FLIR to acquire and mark the targets using the laser. Pilots in other aircraft will practice target acquisition with their Laser Designator Tracker."

"The support from 1st MAF, MAG-12, Kadena AFB, and from Kadena Range management has been outstanding here in Okinawa," said McDonald. "We can only hope that the airspace in Guam and Australia will be as conducive to training as it has been here."

operational

On the **Part I**

WALL



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Cpl. Christopher Mueller, 25, a native of Pacific, Mo., stands guard at Abu Ghraib Prison.

3/24 provides perimeter security for Abu Ghraib Prison

SGT. COLIN WYERS

I Marine Expeditionary Force Public Affairs Office

ABU GHRAIB PRISON, Iraq — Off the road, outside of the prison walls of Abu Ghraib, Iraqi families mill about, waiting to be cleared for admittance, hoping to speak to relatives inside.

At the checkpoint, nicknamed "the Forward," Army military policemen check visitors for weapons and contraband before helping them on to a bus bound for the visitor area.

There are also boys like Hamzi, an 11-year-old from a nearby village.

"A lot of them come from nearby communities," said Lance Cpl. Jared Bierbaum, one of the Marines of Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment that stands post on the prison's perimeter. "They don't go to school. Some of them are helpers, pick up trash, and get money or candy."

Hamzi, smiling, wanders around in a bright orange and green Nike soccer jersey bought with money earned from helping out the Marines, along with his new sweatpants and sandals.

"C'mon, c'mon, c'mon trash!" he said to one of the Marines on post, hopping up and down excitedly.

Named after a nearby village on the outskirts of Baghdad, the prison, a nestling of walled compounds in a walled compound carved out of the barren, hard-top desert, has become notorious after revelations of prisoner abuse by members of the Army's 372nd Military Police Company.

In an address to the Army War College May 24, President George W. Bush announced plans to raze the prison, saying, "Under the dictator, prisons like Abu Ghraib were symbols of death and torture. That same prison became a symbol of disgraceful conduct by a few American troops who dishonored our country and disregarded our values."

Until the walls of the prison are torn down, the Marines of Kilo Co. have been tasked with defending them. They have also become a public face of the prison, as photographers from wire services mingle with the crowds of Iraqi visitors.

"What happened was just horrible," said Maj. Luke

Kratky, the commander of the reserve infantry company based out of Terre Haute, Ind. "The fact that we could be associated with that as Marines has aggravated us beyond what we saw. Marines at (the front gate) have to deal with anger of the local populace, when they had nothing to do with it."

According to the Marines at the post, such outbursts are the exception, not the rule.

"They're just mad because some of them have family inside and can't see them," said Lance Cpl. Mirza Bijedic, who is originally from Sarajevo, Bosnia. "We're here to protect the base, and (military police) handle the visitation."

More often, the families' questions center around life in America.

"They ask us about religion, that kind of thing," said Bijedic. "For me, I'm Muslim, so they ask me why I'm in the Marine Corps. They ask how it is to be a Muslim in the U.S."

"I tell them, nobody cares if you're a Muslim; nobody points a gun at you and says, 'You're a Muslim, go back home.'"

And some, like the kids who come in from local villages, offer their assistance to the Marines.

"We pick up good Arabic from these kids," said Bierbaum, a native of Bloomington, Ill. "I think we learn Arabic faster than we would sitting in the classroom. And they keep coming back (with) something to tell us, if some 'Ali Baba' is in town."

Marines like Bijedic hope to be remembered for what they do, not for the abuses committed before his company arrived.

"Some people ask me about it, and I say, 'it's a few misguided individuals.' Everybody has a couple of bad apples, but in general, we're here to help people."

Part II on page 25



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Lance Cpl. Clint B. Freeman (above and below), a native of Stephenville, Texas, works on a generator.



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Lance Cpl. Aaron Tongate (below), a native of Coleman, Texas, works underneath a tactical vehicle.



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Reserves support “support group”

CPL. MATTHEW J. APPRENDI

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq — Grease stained their hands and boots; sweat drenched their faces and uniforms as the Marines fixed a tactical vehicle at Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

The grease and sweat belong to a detachment of approximately 30 mobilized Reserves from their Abilene, Texas-based motor transportation and maintenance unit.

The Reserves are augmenting Combat Service Support Company 121, Combat Service Support Battalion 12, 1st Force Service Support Group, for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“I’ve been absolutely blown away by how well the Reserves have been performing,” said Capt. Neil Anderson, the commanding officer of CSSC-121, and native of Fallbrook, Calif. “Most of them were not forced into this, they were handpicked from their units – best of the best.”

For some, this is their first deployment. However, for a few, this deployment has etched a first impression that will likely last a lifetime.

“Coming out here has pushed my motivation,” said Lance Cpl. Charles A. Kerry, a mechanic with the company from Snyder, Texas. “It has urged me to stay in (the Marines) as long as I possibly can.”

The 2002 graduate of Snyder High School and the first Marine in his family plans to extend his activation and transition to active-duty when he returns home.

“I never planned on joining,” he said. “I was out for a run one day and a Marine Corps recruiter stopped me and asked, ‘What are you doing with yourself after high school?’ We ended up talking at McDonald’s, I liked what he had to say about the Corps, so here I am.”

Reserves are found in nearly all of the 12 different sections of the company. Some have been afforded the opportunity to cross-train outside their military occupational specialty.

Lance Cpl. Clint B. Freeman was a bulk fueler at his reserve unit. He has also worked with the generator section learning the ins and outs of maintaining electrical power.

“I’m really loving cross training,” said the full-time student, who is majoring in psychology at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, where he also resides. “The active-duty guys gave me a hard time in the beginning, but it was all in good fun. Once we started to work, we were all going for the same mission accomplishment.”

“They’ve (reserves) learned a lot out here,” said Staff Sgt. Floyd H. Thomason, the maintenance chief for the company from Fort Worth. “What they are gaining out here is something they could never learn back home.”

Thomason is a diesel mechanic with Southwest International Trucks in Dallas as a civilian. He laughed, “I can’t get away from this job.”

Outside on the desert floor, the Marines take a break by gathering around a crudely set-up pull-up bar. They egg each other on to see who can do the most.

Lance Cpl. Logan D. Knox, a mechanic with the outfit, from Dallas, is on the bar pulling himself up with a big grin. The Marines shout, “Come on Knox! Get up there – one more.”

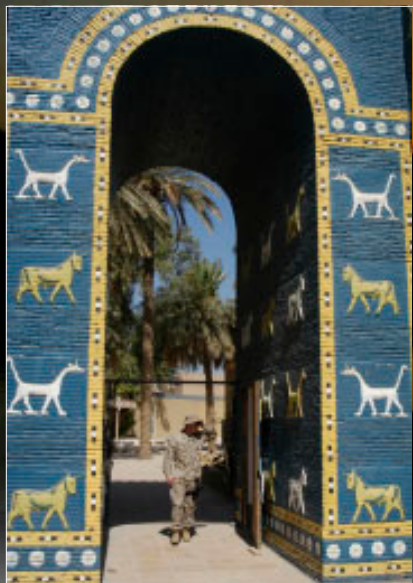
“We definitely have our laughs out here,” said Freeman, chuckling. “Marines will do about anything not to get bored. Pranks are always going on. I’ve tried to open my door before, and it just has fallen off the hinges.”

Freeman added the culprits are usually right around the corner laughing at the spectacle.

“We really try to keep everything somewhat sane out here,” he said. “The days get pretty hectic sometimes, but we always try to set aside a Sunday to play cards or throw some horseshoes and drink a bit of non-alcoholic beer.”

4th ANGLICO

Knights of Babylon



Lance Cpl. William Meyer, a field radio operator and a native of Indianapolis, walks through the Ishtar Gate at Camp Babylon, Iraq, the entrance to the reconstructed palace of Nebuchadnezzar II, the king of ancient Babylon.



Polish soldiers with the Multi-National Division Central-South watch Marines with 4th ANGLICO complete convoy training.

CPL. MATTHEW J. APPRENDI

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

CAMP BABYLON, Iraq — It has been nearly one year since the I Marine Expeditionary Force vacated the ancient city of Babylon, which served as the Marines' headquarters after seizing Baghdad in 2003.

2004 marked a new mission for the roughly 25,000 Marines operating under I MEF - securing and stabilizing the Al Anbar province.

However, the Corps is not without its presence in southwestern Iraq. Detachment C of the 4th Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company resides in the south supporting the Multi-National Division Central-South, a conglomerate of approximately 20 nations, led by the Polish at Camp Babylon. Their area of operation includes the cities of Al Kut, Al-Hillah, Najaf and Karbala.

The Reserve Marines from West Palm Beach, Fla., took the reigns from their predecessors, another detachment from 4th ANGLICO, in early May. Elements of ANGLICO have been operating in Southern Iraq since the fall of Baghdad last year.

"Detachment Bravo set up lots of our liaisons for us," said Maj. Stephen D. Danyluk, the unit's air officer. "We pretty much came in and filled their shoes."

ANGLICO is the liaison between foreign militaries, other U.S. services and Marine Corps assets. ANGLICO Fire Control Teams coordinate Marine Corps air and naval strikes for allied ground forces, thus their motto, "Lightning from the sky. Thunder from the sea."

Since arriving in theater, 4th ANGLICO assets have provided vital support to numerous units including U.S. Army Special Forces, Navy explosive ordnance disposal teams and the Polish, Spanish, Ukrainian and Latvian armies.

"All in all, we've had a great relationship with the

Multi-National Division," said Chief Warrant Officer Kenneth Mckelton, a team leader from Jupiter, Fla. "It's a good experience for the Marines to learn how foreign militaries operate."

The experience gained from this joint effort is garnering dividends and building alliances with foreign countries.

Members of the Polish training branch specifically have been observing Marines' humvee-driving tactics during training and combat missions.

"It's a really great opportunity to work with the Marines," said Col. Thomas Bak, a member of the Polish training branch. "Especially watching them operate the humvees, because we plan on implementing them in our army in the near future."

The Polish army hopes to incorporate lessons learned from the Marines' humvee tactics into a training manual for their own soldiers.

"I think history has proven we are very good brothers-in-arms," added Bak. "As the (MND commanding general) says, 'One mission, one team.' In the future we will operate more and more together."

The highlight of the trip thus far for the crew is working with U.S. Special Forces.

"We feel we've been able to make the best contribution while working with Special Forces," said Staff Sgt. Jose L. Jimenez, a team chief from Miami. "Our primary mission is being exercised while in a joint environment."

Before leaving for Iraq, one of their lance corporals made the following comment about his activation: "I'm young. I'm wild. It's adventurous and it's free." ANGLICO Marines have adopted that saying as their own motto and are applying it daily in Southern Iraq.

Home is where the hardship is

SGT. COLIN WYERS

I Marine Expeditionary Force Public Affairs Office

ABU GHRAIB PRISON, Iraq —

Down the dirt road, through the gate, past a graffiti-covered mural of Saddam Hussein in green fatigues, is a cellblock tucked into the corner of Living Support Area Shadow.

The prisoners once held here by Hussein's regime are gone. Whiteboards with watch rotations and computer printouts of camp regulations have sprung up in the hallways.

Charged with protecting both the inmates and the guards of Abu Ghraib Prison, the Marines of Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment have made the two-tiered cellblock their home.

The bars of the cells have been covered with plywood, and new doors have been constructed. The walls inside the cells have been painted over in bright, fresh hues of white and blue.

Inside, the Marines have set up home entertainment centers, with TVs, DVD players and video game systems.

"All the Army guys spent a lot of money getting stuff sent over here, so we bought it off of them," said Lance Cpl. John David, a radio operator with 2nd Platoon. "We're infantry, so we thought we'd be

living in a bivy sack and out of our patrol packs. All things considered, it's a lot better than we thought we'd have it."

The prison's cell blocks were far less comfortable before the prison was emptied by Saddam Hussein in the days before coalition forces moved north to remove his regime last year. Dissidents were often tortured and executed by members of his security apparatus.

"When you looked in the rooms then they were empty... do you know the saying, 'If the walls could talk?'" David asked. "You know some horrible things happened here."

It's something that can't be completely washed away by the new paint job.

"If you think about what happened here - people were probably killed in the room I'm living in," said 1st Sgt. Brendan Fitzgerald, the company first sergeant. "This place has got a lot of history to it."

Fitzgerald, a native of Fredricksburg, Va., arrived at the prison with the advanced party on March 1. He has kept a journal that tracks mortar attacks since then - sixteen in all, according to his records. The worst attack came April 20, killing 14 detainees and wounding nearly 100 more.

Since offensive operations in Fallujah halted, attacks on the prison have slowed considerably.

"Force protection isn't the most glamorous job in the world, but it's a very important task, and my Marines have done nothing but impressed me since day one," said Maj. Luke Kratky, the company commander.

"The Marines showed nothing but sturdy professionalism and steady discipline."

Kratky and his Marines worry that their good work at the prison could be overshadowed by the actions of several military policemen who were photographed abusing detainees.

"Our biggest

On the Part II

WALL



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

A Marine walks down the hallway of his living area - a former prison cell now used to accommodate the Marines inside the prison.

concern is going home, and our family and friends (could) think we were a part of the abuse, even though we were not even activated yet (when the abuse occurred)."

It's a concern shared by Sgt. Kimberly Payne, an intelligence analyst with Marine Forces Reserve augmenting Multi-National Corps Iraq's Fusion Analysis Cell. Looking around one of the camp's few green spots - a small garden located in a courtyard surrounded by the secured building - she reflected on her eventual homecoming.

"It'll be weird," said Payne.

"When we get back, and people ask me what I did, I don't know if I want them to tell them I was at Abu Ghraib."



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Lance Cpl. Kelby S. Breigvogel, a native of Dale, Ind., cleans his rifle inside his living quarters.

Part III on page 28

HMLA-775

Coyotes on the hunt in Iraq

CPL. MATTHEW J. APPENDI

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq — The horizon turned sideways as the UH-1N Huey banked a hard right in the overcast Iraqi sky during a convoy escort mission.

On the right, inside the helicopter, hands grasped a .50 caliber heavy-machine gun. On the left, a Marine gripped a GAU-17 machine gun, a six-barrel gun that unloads 3,000 rounds per minute.

"We call this one the 'Fat Lady,'" said Gunnery Sgt. Michael J. Mikkelson, a Huey crew chief, and a native of West Bend, Wis., referring to the GAU mounted on the Huey. "When she sings, it's all over for the enemy."

The machine gun spits out enough rounds to write a name in cursive, according to the crew chiefs of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 775, Marine Aircraft Group 16, an activated Reserve unit nicknamed the Coyotes.

HMLA-775, comprised of both Hueys and AH-1W Super

"We call this one the 'Fat Lady'... when she sings, it's all over for the enemy."

Gunnery Sgt. Michael J. Mikkelson
Huey crew chief



Cpl. Matthew J. Appendi

Staff Sgt. Jason Wohlberg, a crew chief and native of Stroudsburg, Pa., mans a GAU-17 machine gun during a convoy escort mission near Fallujah, Iraq, inside a UH-1N Huey helicopter.

Cobra helicopters, has conducted escort missions and close air support for infantry units on the ground in Fallujah and Ar Ramadi while in Iraq.

Since touching down in Iraq earlier this year, the unit has tacked on combat flight hours nearly every day in their Cobras and Hueys.

Hundreds of feet below, Marine ground forces have witnessed the squadron's aerial skills.

Cpl. Jarod K. Stevens, the assistant data chief for I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group, had a front-row seat on one occasion.

While guarding a tactical checkpoint on the night of April 6, he recounted, the checkpoint received enemy indirect and direct fire. Close Air Support was called immediately.

"For the rest of the night, we had support, and everything was quiet," the resident of Frisco, Texas, said. "All of the enemy hid once they showed up, and didn't cause any more problems. (Air support) kept the enemy from attacking us any more that night."

During peacetime, HMLA-775 is split, one half residing at Camp Pendleton, Calif., the other at Johnstown, Pa. It is only during wartime that the unit operates as a whole.

"What's unique about our squadron is that you probably couldn't find a pilot here without at least ten years of experience," said Maj. Rob Russell, a Huey pilot, from Oceanside, Calif.

According to Russell, most of the squadron's pilots spent their first ten years in the Corps on active duty before entering the Reserves. However, he did admit the average age of pilots in the squadron is older than an active duty unit.

"The younger guys might be a little more quick on the reaction," said the activated American Eagle Airlines pilot, "but we have the experience and the ability to know what reaction to use in mostly all situations in the air."

According to Russell, Cobra helicopters, sometimes referred to as Snakes, are specifically designed to attack. By using the Cobra's pinpoint accuracy, pilots are



Cpl. Matthew J. Appendi

A Marine guides an AH-1W Super Cobra onto the flight line.

able to reach out and touch enemy forces from miles away.

The Huey - a utility helicopter by nature - has the ability to attack enemy troops, deliver supplies and evacuate casualties. The Huey also has a 360-degree area of fire to take down enemy forces.

"The two helicopters complement one another," said Douglas, a 1988 University of Maryland graduate. "We've been able to fully use their capabilities out here."

Inside the ready room, the pilots watch a few movies to pass the time between missions.

Once an order is given, within minutes the pilots are seated in their helicopters taxiing off the runway into the skies of Iraq supporting a ground element.

"That's the whole reason why we exist - to support the Marines on the ground," Douglas said.

It's a sentiment shared by Marines on the ground.

"The sound of the Snakes above us gave us confidence when we fought in Fallujah," said Capt. D.A. Zembiec, Echo Company commanding officer, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment. "Marines would shout with pride, when the Cobras rocketed and strafed the insurgents."

Ground crew maintains mission readiness

CPL. MATTHEW J. APPRENDI

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq — The afternoon sun poured down all of its 100 degrees on the Reserves with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 775 at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, while they maintained their Ah-1W Super Cobra and UH-1N Huey helicopters.

Since augmenting Marine Aircraft Group 16 in theater earlier this year, the squadron has been heavily engaged in supporting Marine infantry units with close air support in Fallujah and Ar Ramadi, as well as conducting security escorts for convoys.

"(The helicopters) are intimidation," said Cpl. Matthew A. Wright, a native of Niles, Mich., who has seen the helicopters in action from the ground up while on convoys with I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group motor transportation. "If I was the enemy on the ground, they would definitely put the fear in me."

Behind each of these missions, whether Close Air Support or convoy escorts, the Marines on the ground who maintain the helicopters have set the stage for the pilots and crew chiefs to perform.

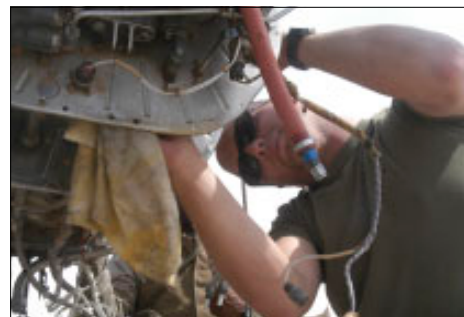
"I can't say enough good things about them," said Maj. Erik Douglas, a Cobra pilot with the squadron from Oceanside, Calif. "They continue to perform remarkably in austere conditions."

As Cobras return from missions, the Marines run backwards facing the gunship to direct the pilots into their parking spaces.

"We have to be quick on our feet," said Lance Cpl. Christopher L. Eiben, a plane captain with the squadron from Huntington Beach, Calif. "We've got a lot of things going on at the same time, planes coming in, going out and refueling - you've got to stay sharp."

Eiben explained his job as a plane captain simply means he's in charge of keeping the "bird" ready to fly. He certifies to the pilots that the helo is mission capable before they take-off.

"The job has got its ups and downs," said Eiben, "but when



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

A Marine works on a UH-1N Huey.

you see the birds come back in one piece, it makes it all worthwhile."

"We wouldn't be out here without them," said Douglas, who is a biology teacher at Oceanside High School as a civilian. "We wouldn't be able to complete our mission."

Eiben added the pilots and the maintenance Marines have to have a good relationship with each other - faith and trust is paramount between the two aspects of a squadron.

"We've all started off on the ground learning how the planes operate and how to fix them," said Staff Sgt. Mark J. Covill, a crew chief with the squadron. "After you work on them so long, it's only natural to want to get up in one."

This is exactly what Pfc. Daniel S. Boatright aspires to accomplish from his experiences as a mechanic, but on the civilian side. The 2003 Martin Luther King Jr. High School graduate from Riverside, Calif., wants to be a pilot.

And what better way to get started than by learning how a plane operates, said Boatright, who's completing his first deployment in the Corps.

"I've never even been on a drill," he said. "I joined the unit, and within two weeks I was leaving for Iraq to do my new job."

Boatright plans on attending California Baptist University in Riverside when he returns home with his squadron after they complete their one-year activation in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Because of their exceptional work ethic," Douglas said, "the aircrafts continually make the flight schedule."



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Lance Cpl. Joseph Mixer, a crew chief and native of State College, Pa., performs maintenance on a UH-1N Huey.

On the WALL

Part III



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Lance Cpl. Michael Weideman from St. Louis, provides security from atop a look-out tower.

Between Iraq and a hard place

SGT. COLIN WYERS

I Marine Expeditionary Force Public Affairs Office

ABU GHRAIB PRISON, Iraq — "Come get your ice!" the sergeant of the guard yells.

Out of a stout, squared-off hole in the base of the wall emerges a Marine decked out in full body armor. He grabs two bags of ice from the cooler and heads back into the hole and up a thin, winding staircase through the darkness.

At the top, a plywood board gives way to the light.

The guard post, one of several dotting the walls of Abu Ghraib Prison, is reinforced with sandbags and covered in camouflaged netting for shade. General orders of a sentry and radio call signs are scribbled on cardboard with a black felt-tipped marker and hung on the

walls. In the corner sits a short, stout cooler, where old water is dumped out over the side and the fresh bags of ice are dumped in.

The Marines of Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment have manned those towers, providing security for the prison nestled between two highways going from Baghdad to Fallujah since March.

"In the first couple of weeks, (anti-Iraqi forces) tried to push the envelope with us," said Maj. Luke Kratsky, the company's commanding officer. "They've realized that once we set the standard, we keep it. We've got nothing but good comments from the Army, all the way up to the general officer level, on the improvements here."

Lance Cpl. David West, a native of Scottsburg, Ind., mans the guard post overlooking the nearby village that has been nicknamed "Little Mogadishu," for its resemblance to the Somali city where an Army UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter was shot down in 1993.

Unlike its namesake, Little Mog has caused few problems for the Marines on post.

"It's pretty quiet," he said.

Like his fellow Marines at the front gate, West is often visited by children from the village.

"We always throw them candy, hygiene gear, water-stuff we get shipped from home," he said. "Some guys are giving them shoes and skivvie shirts."

West said the children sometimes ask the Marines about the abuse

committed by military policemen before the Marines' arrival.

"The kids that come up here ask what's going on. They've obviously seen the pictures. But they tell us 'America good, Saddam bad.'"

When the prison was still under the management of the former regime, many residents of the nearby village were held there.

"Some of their parents have been killed in this prison," said West. "A kid named 'Ice' says his dad was hung in here, by Saddam."

One of the buildings at Abu Ghraib was a place where many Iraqis, including possibly Ice's father, were executed. The gate to the courtyard surrounding it was locked up after coalition forces arrived.

Inside the heavy metal door, into the empty main room and down the hall to the left sits a single hallway of cells, with doors barely wide enough for a man to squeeze through. The top halves of the walls are haphazardly painted black, and long streaks of dried paint run down over the aged white below like water running down a windshield.

At the other end of the building is a single room, with a ramp leading up to platform on the far wall. Two rusted steel trap doors are set into the floor, beneath two rebar loops set into the ceiling. Between them sits a box with two flat, thin white levers.

"They would throw a rope through there," said Staff Sgt. Tommy Weatherholtz, the platoon sergeant for Weapons Platoon,



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

A security tower overlooks one of two highways going from Baghdad to Fallujah between which the prison is located.



Cpl. Matthew J. Apprendi

Prisoners awaited the death penalty in these cells. The "death chamber" has been closed down since the U.S. liberated Iraq from Saddam Hussein.

pointing to the ceiling, "make a noose, tie it right here - and whoosh, drop the floor."

Beneath the platform on the floor below, a single brown sandal sits, collecting dust.

Weatherholtz only knows that thousands of people were executed there. He doesn't know how many of them are buried nearby.

"Have you seen any grass growing around this place?" Weatherholtz asks. "A little bit, maybe?"

He leaves the building and steps out into the front courtyard, where occasional strands of green reach up to scrape ankles, and walks around to the back of the building.

Nearby, a bloodied piece of gauze is tied around a pipe protruding from the building's walls. The grass here is thick, taller than the children who gather around the guard post.

Outside the walls surrounding the execution chamber, Marines on the towers continue their vigil over the prison. Their future is uncertain. After June 30, when the coalition transfers sovereignty to the new Iraqi government, detainees will be turned over to Iraqi forces. Until then, their place is in the towers, and on the gates.

Water plant quenches long parched village

SGT. MATT EPRIGHT

MCB Camp Pendleton, Calif., Public Affairs Office

AL KABANI, Iraq — For the first time in almost 10 years, the citizens here have clean water and constant electricity flowing into their homes, thanks to their local government, the Marines and their own hard work.

Muktar Ismael Hamaad, the village leader, and Thayer Hamdallah, the Iraqi government representative for the area, met July 25, 2004, with Lt. Col. Rod T. Arrington, the commander of 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, to cut the ribbon on a water purification complex now serving three separate villages with a population totaling almost 3,000.

The Reserve infantry battalion, based at nearby Camp Taqaddum, funded the \$175,000 project through a program established by the now defunct Coalition Provisional Authority.

Thirty-five local Iraqis worked 10-hour days for more than a month to complete the 30,000 gallon-per-hour purifier, said Ahmed Abass Kassar, the project supervisor, through a translator.

Though it would have been quicker and cheaper for the Marines to install the equipment themselves, they wanted to let the Iraqis take the lead so they would come away with the experience needed to do such jobs.

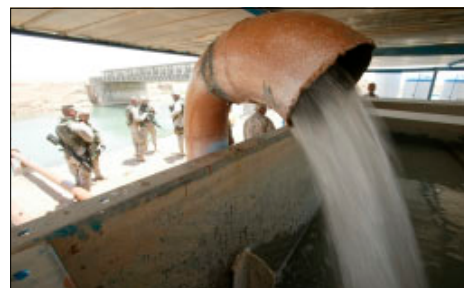
"It isn't about just getting them the water in the best manner possible. It's about letting them do it themselves and giving them a stake in their own future," said Maj. Luke W. Kratky, the battalion's information operations officer.

The villagers have been without fresh water for a long time, said Kassar, who is also the water manager for the area.

"For the last eight or nine years they had no good water to drink," said 46-year-old Kassar.

Instead, they had to pump water directly from the nearby lake and boil it to try to make it clean enough to drink, said Hamaad, also speaking through a translator. This still left bacteria in the water and caused numerous health problems for the villagers.

"This project is the most important thing," said 28-year-old Hamdallah, who had sought funding for the



Staff Sgt. Bill Lisbon

Water is pumped from a canal to be filtered for the approximately 3,000 residents of three villages near Camp Taqaddum, Iraq.

project since he became the district manager for the area almost two years ago. "We are too thankful to U.S. forces for their help."

Under the government of Saddam Hussein, the villagers were afraid to seek help. The area the 500-person community occupies was once officer housing for an Iraqi military base. Though the Iraqi military had not used it for years, the residents were concerned that the government might throw them out of their homes if they asked for anything, said 36-year-old Hamaad.

After the ribbon cutting, Hamaad took the Marines on a tour of the village, to show them the recently installed plumbing that carries water to each of the houses, as well as a \$22,000 Marine-funded generator that gives the residents reliable electricity 24 hours a day.

Before Iraqi contractors installed the generator, the village only had power for a few hours each day.

Word of the water project has already reached other communities in the area. They want the Marines to get contractors to run water pipes to them as well.

"The other towns feel jealous," said Hamaad.

The battalion, elements of which provide security for the 1st Force Service Support Group at nearby Camp Taqaddum, is waiting for Hamdallah to take bids from contractors able to perform the proposed work, so the Marines can attempt to meet the other villages' needs as they did for Al Kabani, said Kratky, a 33-year-old native of Fenton, Mo.

"We want to build on what we did there," said Kratky. "These are tangible things that the Iraqi people can see."

“College for Combat” would beef up GI Bill for Reserves

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

MARINE FORCES RESERVE, New Orleans — While not restricted in their role fighting alongside their active duty counterparts on the frontlines of Iraq and Afghanistan, many Reserves don't qualify for the same educational opportunities active duty service members enjoy, because of certain rules in the Montgomery GI Bill.

The powerful recruiting incentive and career advancement tool is currently available to all service members with over two years of continuous active duty service. Because of this two-year eligibility requirement, some say the Reserves, who activate sporadically in support of the Global War on Terrorism, are being left behind.

“We've been activating, deactivating, and then reactivating to get as much life out of our units as possible,” said Lt. Col. Keith A Hulet, director of manpower for Marine Forces Reserve.

Because of this activation method, few members of the Reserves are activated for two consecutive years, making them ineligible for GI Bill benefits.

Fortunately a voice is speaking up for Reserves in the halls of Washington. The Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee passed the “Veterans Benefit Improvement Act” July 20. The legislation, referred to as “College for Combat,” would change current GI Bill requirements to two cumulative, instead of consecutive, years of active duty service within the span of five years.

Sen. Zell Miller, co-chair of the Senate Reserve Caucus, was the original sponsor of the “College for

Combat” bill. The Georgia Democrat said in a press release July 20, that “...as our military continues to deploy more (Reserves) for longer periods, it's important that Congress recognizes their sacrifice and commitment. I am extremely pleased the committee has passed this bill, which will help eliminate the current inequities that exist between active duty and mobilized (Reserves).”

With increasing Reserve activation and operational requirements, many worry that recruiting and retention within the Reserves will suffer.

“Not surprisingly, long combat deployments and the inevitable stress and strain caused by recurrent mobilizations will likely drive many (Reserves) out of the military,” said the Military Legislative Assistant to Miller, Laura Friedel, “That is why Senator Miller, along with Senator (Mike) DeWine, introduced this legislation... that would greatly strengthen one of our Reserve component's most important recruiting and retention tools – the Montgomery GI Bill.”

It will need to be passed through the House of Representatives and signed by President George W. Bush to become law.

Lt. Gen. Dennis M. McCarthy, Commander, Marine Forces Reserve, voiced his support for increasing the educational benefits of his Marines. “Each year in my testimony before the House and Senate, I have stressed the need to widen educational benefits for Marines and members of the other reserve components. I am really glad to see that the Senate is about to take this step,” said Lt. Gen. McCarthy.

Increased healthcare benefits

CPL. ADAM J. TUSTIN

Marine Forces Reserve Public Affairs Office

U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES PACIFIC, CAMP H.M. SMITH, Hawaii

— Healthcare coverage for Reserve Marines and their dependents has been expanded to cover a wider range of benefits as of May 2004, according to MARADMIN 233/04.

MARADMIN 233/04 corrects erroneous information from MARADMIN 205/04, released earlier this year, and contains new information.

The new healthcare coverage applies to members of the Selected Marine Corps Reserve, Individual Mobilization Augmentees and Individual Ready Reserve Marines who are activated in support of a contingency operation. This coverage does not however, apply to members of the Active Reserve.

One of the most significant changes announced in the MARADMIN was the

timing of when military members and their families become eligible for Tricare coverage.

Normally, members of the ready reserve and their family members are not eligible for Tricare coverage until the military member has been activated. Now, members and their families are authorized TRICARE coverage starting as early as 60 days prior to a Marine's activation date.

Members notified of their impending activation are urged to continue their existing health and dental coverage for themselves and their family members until they have completed their 31st day of active duty. This protects against the loss of healthcare coverage in case the member is found not qualified for active duty or is deactivated before 30 days.

Another change included in the MARADMIN concerned healthcare coverage after a member's deactivation date.

Normally, transitional healthcare coverage is limited to 60 or 120 days

depending on the member's years of cumulative active service.

However, the period of coverage has been increased to 180 days for those members of the ready reserve activated in support of a contingency operation for a period of more than 30 days. Upon deactivation, Reserves are automatically disenrolled in Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, but can re-enroll both themselves and their family members for the transitional healthcare eligibility.

Reserves are responsible for ensuring that their family members are enrolled in DEERS at a DEERS-RAPIDS (Realtime Automated Personal Identification System) site. Reserves and their family members may verify their enrollment in DEERS by contacting their local DEERS support office.

Reserves are encouraged to make sure that both their own information and their family's information is up-dated. They cannot assume that all the information in the DEERS is present and correct.



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Reserve Enlisted Commissioning Program (RECP) & Warrant Officer Program

Both are highly selective programs that afford exceptionally qualified Reserve enlisted Marines the opportunity to attain appointments in the commissioned officer corps.

Detailed information can be found at www.usmc.mil > HQMC > Headquarters Marine Corps > Manpower and Reserve Affairs > Reserve Affairs > Career Managment Team, call (877) 415-9275 or e-mail: cmt@manpower.usmc.mil.



More information can
be found at:

https://1nweb1.manpower.usmc.mil/manpower/mi/mra_ofct.nsf/RA/Career+Information

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